



**SOUTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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GROUNDBREAKING HELD FOR STATE'S NEW VETERANS HOME

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(South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs)

PIERRE, S.D. – Veterans, state and local government leaders, veterans organizations, residents and partners within the veteran network gathered for the ceremonial groundbreaking for the state's new Veterans Home in Hot Springs, S.D. on Wednesday, Sept. 25.

Speakers at the event included Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Lt. Gov. Matt Michels and Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

In his remarks, Gov. Daugaard thanked veterans for their service and those who made the project a reality along with the hundreds more who will build it. The Governor also provided attendees with a history of the Home and recognized the name sake Medal of Honor Recipient Michael J. Fitzmaurice.

“History is full of lessons for current generations...and the lesson here is that persistence and determination for a worthy cause will always, eventually, win,” said Lt. Gov. Michels in his speech. “When it comes to caring for our veterans, South Dakotans will always be persistent and determined to help them.”

The newly designed Michael J. Fitzmaurice South Dakota Veteran's Home will be a 133,000-square-foot stacked two-story building with a lower level walkout main entrance. The 100-bed facility will be used to serve South Dakota veterans and will contain 52 skilled nursing beds on the main level and 48 non-skilled or residential living beds on the upper level. The living spaces will be broken into eight neighborhoods housed in eight wings. Each neighborhood will include a living room, dining room and kitchen area that will provide a home-like environment to the 12-13 occupants housed in each neighborhood. The design incorporates residential type furnishings and finishes, and warm, welcoming colors to reduce the institutional look and give the spaces a more comforting feel.

This new facility will include adequate nursing care, staff offices and support spaces throughout. Residents will have access to physical therapy, speech therapy, fitness, recreational opportunities, workshops and an auditorium. The community space will be located in the center of the building on the main floor and includes a kitchen, cafeteria, postal service, pharmacy, barber shop and community room.

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The facility will contain energy efficient heating and cooling systems, low flow-fixtures to reduce water consumption, as well as many windows to bring natural light to the interior spaces. The biomass boiler system will use local wood chips as a fuel source which will reduce the annual fuel cost.

“Today’s groundbreaking ceremony is the culmination of nearly a decade of work and effort,” said Secretary Zimmerman. “We may only have six shovels and a little dirt here today to work with, but today we’re going to begin a renewed commitment to South Dakota’s veterans. We are fortunate to have the commitment and support of the Governor, Lt. Governor, congressional delegation, legislators, veterans service organizations, County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers and state, county and local elected officials. It takes a team to make this dream a reality.”

For updates on the project, visit the Department’s website at <http://www.vetaffairs.sd.gov>